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Publishers Weekly

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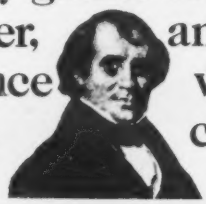

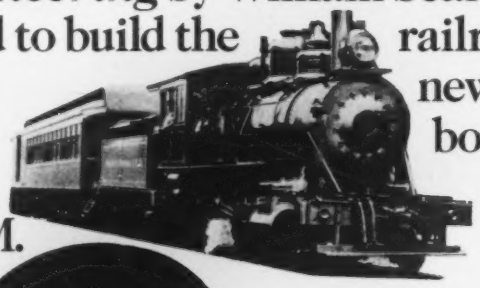

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Thomson to Sell General Publishing Units of ABP Conglomerate

As had been expected, the International Thomson Organisation is selling off parts of its newly acquired subsidiary, the British conglomerate Associated Book Publishers. The divestment covers ABP's general division and the general lists of three of the group's overseas companies. The move seems logical, in that ITO in March 1985 sold its general publishing houses—Hamish Hamilton, Michael Joseph, Rainbird and Sphere—to the Penguin group and stated its aim of concentrating on specialist and professional publishing.

The U.K. general division of ABP is made up of Eyre & Spottiswoode, Methuen Children's Books, Methuen London and Pitkin Pictorials. The oldest of these houses, Eyre & Spottiswoode, which specializes in bibles, *The Book of Common Prayer* and religious titles, dates back to 1796, when Charles Eyre was granted a royal patent, still held by the firm, to publish the Authorized Version of the Bible. The youngest member is Pitkin Pictorials, specializing in inexpensive illustrated titles on Britain's heritage, especially the monarchy; started up in 1972, it was acquired by ABP last year. The well-respected Methuen name borne by the two major houses within this division dates back to 1889.

Methuen London has a particularly strong drama list, which is closely linked to the performing theater, and is famous for its humor titles, which include Monty Python, Thelwell and Sue Townsend's phenomenal Adrian Mole books, which have sold well over five million copies worldwide. The fiction backlist has John Braine, Christopher Isherwood and Evelyn Waugh, while current authors include Leslie Thomas and Maureen Duffy. Methuen Children's Books publishes one of the longest British children's lists, with authors of the caliber of Dick Bruna and Tomie dePaola.

The general lists represent only small portions of the Canadian and Australian companies, the solid foundation of whose business is law publishing. Methuen Inc. in the United States, now concentrating solely on academic and STM publishing, is not affected by the divestments. However Reed Methuen, New Zealand's largest domestic publisher, has a strong general list.

One aspect of the breakup that has caused particular concern in many quarters is the virtual certainty that the academic company Methuen & Co., which is to remain with ITO, will lose its name—and presumably its identity—since it is expected that any buyer of the general Methuen houses will want to keep the name. There is an added complication in the fact that Routledge & Kegan Paul, acquired by ABP in 1985 (the year before it celebrated its 150th anniversary), is not a purely academic publisher, though it currently forms part of the ABP Academic Division. It seems likely that in the long term ITO will not want to keep imprints such as the feminist Pandora, started in 1983.

It seems probable that the sale will be completed fairly quickly, as speculation that such a divestment was imminent had given potential bidders for the U.K. division a chance to size up the situation. Michael Turner, ABP's chief executive, stressing that the intention was to sell the Methuen adult and children's companies together, told *PW* that a number of approaches had already been made.

Although Turner could not reveal names (he did acknowledge, however, that the interested parties included American companies) the trade believes that the most likely British contenders are Collins, Penguin, Random House's recent U.K. acquisitions Cape, Chatto and the Bodley Head, and Transworld, Bertelsmann's U.K. subsidiary, which has publicly expressed its interest. Other possibles are Simon & Schuster's U.K. company and Hodder.

Yet another possibility is a management buyout, currently being attempted by Methuen London managing director Geoffrey Strachan and three colleagues.

Speaking of the sale of ABP's overseas interests, CEO Turner commented: "We would very much hope that we can do a deal involving the transfer of the whole of the international general business to a single buyer."

ABP is also divesting itself of its bookselling arm: the Hammicks retail and wholesaling business, which had a £12.5 million turnover in 1987 (up 27.6% over the previous year).

—V.M.

AAP Sales Report for July

Category	% change, July	% change, YTD
Adult hardcover	-4.0	9.7
Adult paperback	0.5	15.6
Juvenile hardcover	32.5	25.2
Juvenile paperback	29.7	28.7
Univ. Pr. hardcover	9.0	5.4
Univ. Pr. paperback	0.5	13.7
Bibles, etc.	12.7	2.2
Mass market paperback	53.8	12.7
Book club	16.0	13.7
Mail order	16.8	3.2
Sci-tech	-2.2	15.3
College texts	-2.6	0.5
School texts	6.0	7.2

OBITUARY NOTES

Lisa Gordon, known professionally as Lisa Fillman, who was formerly deputy director of publicity in the trade division of Harper & Row, died September 8 after a long illness. She was 57.

She joined the publicity department in 1971 after a long career in broadcasting and on the stage, and retired in February of this year. Among the writers for whom she handled publicity were Colleen McCullough, Barbara Gordon, Doris Kearns, Dick Francis, Theodore White, Annie Dillard, Erich Segal, Diana Kennedy and Roger Kahn.

Andrew Stewart, former president of Denhard & Stewart and a pioneer in book advertising, died September 9 at his home in Manhattan. Stewart, who had been suffering from lung cancer, was 79.

Beginning his career in journalism and public relations, Stewart joined the agency that became Denhard & Stewart in 1935 as a copywriter and layout artist. After service in World War II, he returned to the agency as general manager, responsible for the firm's creative work. In 1956, he bought out Charles Denhard, a founder of the agency, and became president. A friend of Alfred A. Knopf, Cass Canfield and other early giants in the book industry, Stewart retired in 1973.

Brian Sumrall, veteran publishers' representative, died August 28 in Tomball, Tex., of a stroke suffered 10 days previously.

He had worked for Books Inc., of Houston for eight years and as a sales representative for Avon for five years. For the past three years he had been associated with Palmer Associates.

An art scholarship will be established in his name at his alma mater, Lamar University in Beaumont, Tex. Contributions may be sent to the Brian Sumrall Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Theron Palmer, 1503 W. 29th St., Austin, Tex. 78703.

U.S. Book Title Output and Average Prices, Final 1986 Figures

BY CHANDLER B. GRANNIS

Almost 53,000 books, both brand new titles and new editions, were published in the United States in 1986, according to final figures compiled from R. R. Bowker databases. The total, including all books of all kinds for which information is available, is 733 titles below the peak all-time figure of 53,380, recorded in 1983.

About 33,000 of the 1986 output consist of hardcover books; almost 16,000 comprise "trade" or non-mass market paperbacks; and the rest are mass market.

The overall average price of hardcover books on a per-volume basis rose 3% from 1985 to 1986, with hardcover books priced under $81 per volume going up about 2.1%. Mass market paperback prices went up an average of 9% per volume, and paperbacks other than mass market showed a 5.9% increase.

Tables 1–4 show title counts of entries in Bowker's *American Book Publishing Record* system. Table 5 is taken from entries in the Bowker *Paperbound Books in Print*.

Table 1 sums up the title counts: the first two columns show brand-new titles and new or revised editions of hardcover and trade paperbound books combined; the third column shows the total of those two; the fourth column shows overall totals with the inclusion of mass market paperbacks. Table 2 enumerates the mass market paperbacks, but no separation between new books and new or revised editions is available for these books.

Table 3 shows other paperbacks without subject breakdown. Table 4 indicates the trend of imports, and Table 5 gives at least a partial view of translations into English.

Tables A through C show average prices per volume. Table A gives overall hardcover price averages; Table A–1 covers hardcover volumes priced under $81. Table B gives mass market prices, and Table C reports other paperback prices.

Each of the 23 standard subject groups used here represent one or more specific Dewey Decimal Classifications, as follows:
Agriculture, 630–639, 712–719; Art, 700–711, 720–779; Biography (no Dewey numbers used); Business,

TABLE 1

AMERICAN BOOK TITLE PRODUCTION

CATEGORY	1984	1985				1986 FINAL			
	ALL HARD & PAPER	HARD & TRADE PAPER Books	Editions	Totals	ALL HARD & PAPER	HARD & TRADE PAPER Books	Editions	Totals	ALL HARD & PAPER
Agriculture	507	450	79	529	536	477	81	558	564
Art	1,838	1,392	150	1,542	1,545	1,504	190	1,694	1,697
Biography	2,098	1,604	270	1,874	1,953	1,805	281	2,086	2,152
Business	1,696	1,142	350	1,492	1,518	1,197	376	1,573	1,604
Education	1,052	885	188	1,073	1,085	866	143	1,009	1,029
Fiction	5,413	2,290	291	2,581	5,105	2,687	467	3,154	5,578
General Works	3,021	2,549	270	2,819	2,905	2,144	279	2,423	2,484
History	2,257	1,913	383	2,296	2,327	2,015	423	2,438	2,471
Home Economics	1,306	999	128	1,127	1,228	900	106	1,006	1,103
Juveniles	3,128	3,183	191	3,374	3,801	3,849	206	4,055	4,516
Language	670	519	99	618	632	528	123	651	668
Law	1,406	1,036	307	1,343	1,349	1,018	363	1,381	1,385
Literature	2,006	1,669	260	1,929	1,964	1,788	322	2,110	2,145
Medicine	3,554	2,925	618	3,543	3,579	2,845	557	3,402	3,445
Music	387	277	78	355	364	270	76	346	356
Philosophy, Psychology	1,554	1,220	227	1,447	1,559	1,323	264	1,587	1,669
Poetry, Drama	1,164	1,075	75	1,150	1,166	1,180	71	1,251	1,278
Religion	2,482	2,211	329	2,540	2,564	2,464	299	2,763	2,788
Science	3,236	2,808	481	3,289	3,304	2,782	564	3,346	3,360
Sociology, Economics	7,794	6,285	1,112	7,397	7,441	6,815	1,042	7,857	7,912
Sports, Recreation	1,299	876	129	1,005	1,154	843	189	1,032	1,192
Technology	2,639	2,079	405	2,484	2,526	2,213	449	2,662	2,698
Travel	551	366	90	456	465	412	121	533	543
TOTAL	51,058	39,753	6,510	46,263	50,070	41,925	6,992	48,917	52,637

NOTE: Figures for mass market paperbound book production are based on entries in *Paperbound Books in Print*. Other figures are from the *Weekly Record (American Book Publishing Record)* database. The heading "Books" refers to brand-new titles; "Editions" refers to new or revised editions.

650–659; Education, 370–379; Fiction; General Works, 000–099; History, 900–909, 930–999; Home Economics, 640–649; Juveniles; Language, 400–499; Law, 340–349; Literature 800–810, 813–820, 823–899; Medicine, 610–619; Music, 780–789; Philosophy, Psychology, 100–199; Poetry, Drama, 811, 812, 821, 822; Religion, 200–299; Science, 500–599; Sociology, Economics, 300–339, 350–369, 380–399; Sports, Recreation, 790–799; Technology, 600–609, 620–629, 660-699; Travel, 910–919.

TABLE 2

MASS MARKET PAPERBACKS

CATEGORY	1984 FINAL	1985 FINAL	1986 FINAL
Agriculture	2	7	6
Art	3	3	3
Biography	75	79	76
Business	22	26	31
Education	5	12	20
Fiction	2,663	2,524	2,424
General Works	66	86	61
History	25	31	33
Home Econ.	83	101	97
Juveniles	257	427	461
Language	23	14	17
Law	6	6	4
Literature	57	35	35
Medicine	29	36	43
Music	3	9	10
Philos., Psych.	85	112	82
Poetry, Drama	9	16	27
Religion	14	24	25
Science	53	15	14
Sociol., Econ.	45	44	55
Sports, Recr.	181	149	160
Technology	85	42	36
Travel	12	9	10
TOTAL	3,083	3,807	3,730

TABLE 4

IMPORTED TITLES
HARD & TRADE PAPER ONLY

CATEGORY	1984	1985			1986 FINAL		
	TOTALS	BOOKS	ED'NS	TOTALS	BOOKS	ED'NS	TOTALS
Agriculture	103	101	17	118	117	7	124
Art	61	157	9	166	160	8	168
Biography	240	188	28	216	163	25	188
Business	140	120	26	196	140	19	159
Education	190	207	4	211	212	8	220
Fiction	164	155	16	171	199	48	247
General Works	268	312	17	329	322	24	346
History	324	348	47	395	337	47	384
Home Econ.	41	36	5	41	36	6	42
Juveniles	69	87	5	92	108	4	112
Language	179	200	16	216	212	22	334
Law	158	147	23	170	151	39	190
Literature	238	246	21	267	241	20	261
Medicine	508	531	67	598	607	58	665
Music	54	64	6	70	60	6	66
Philosophy, Psychology	211	257	10	267	243	20	263
Poetry, Drama	174	203	17	220	206	10	216
Religion	160	153	20	173	131	10	141
Science	1,032	1,121	121	1,242	1,061	153	1,214
Sociology, Economics	1,373	1,421	138	1,559	1,491	144	1,635
Sports, Recreation	137	95	12	107	100	10	110
Technology	454	364	55	419	554	64	618
Travel	61	56	5	61	36	10	46
TOTAL	6,339	6,569	685	7,304	6,887	762	7,749

TABLE 3

PAPERBACKS (EXCLUDING MASS MARKET)

CATEGORY	1984	1985			1986 FINAL		
	TOTALS	NEW BOOKS	NEW ED'NS	TOTALS	NEW BOOKS	NEW ED'NS	TOTALS
Fiction	518	365	71	436	353	78	431
Nonfiction	14,649	12,520	2,383	14,903	12,984	2,518	15,502
TOTAL	15,167	12,885	2,454	15,339	13,337	2,596	15,933

TABLE 5

TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH
HARD & TRADE PAPER ONLY

	ARABIC	DANISH	DUTCH	FINNISH	FRENCH	GERMAN	HEBREW	ITALIAN	JAPANESE	LATIN	NORWEGIAN	RUSSIAN	SPANISH	SWEDISH	YIDDISH	OTHER	TOTALS
1984 Final	16	27	38	10	355	425	28	97	64	42	4	181	97	21	10	NA	1,439
1985 Final	8	17	40	5	416	369	29	92	59	30	13	182	86	28	15	NA	1,385
1986 Final	29	26	48	3	485	470	45	110	116	36	9	185	93	26	11	NA	1,762

NOTE: "Total" covers only the languages listed here.

TABLE A

HARDCOVER AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES

CATEGORY	1977	1984		1985		1986 FINAL		
	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	TOTAL	PRICES
Agriculture	$16.24	359	$34.92	368	$36.77	391	$ 15,348.85	$39.26
Art	21.24	1,114	33.03	908	35.15	996	35,264.05	35.41
Biography	15.34	1,408	22.53	1,298	22.20	1,446	33,196.93	22.96
Business	18.00	1,116	26.01	1,040	28.84	1,115	34,250.18	30.72
Education	12.95	580	24.47	602	27.28	559	14,596.31	26.11
Fiction	10.09	1,989	14.74	1,800	15.29	2,212	37,256.41	16.84
General Works	30.99	1,602	35.61	1,632	37.91	1,151	58,885.08	38.97
History	17.12	1,432	27.53	1,506	27.02	1,598	45,444.58	28.44
Home Economics	11.16	655	15.70	594	17.50	532	10,089.97	18.97
Juveniles	6.65	2,398	10.02	2,529	9.95	3,066	32,608.10	10.64
Language	14.96	410	22.97	347	28.68	351	11,514.52	32.80
Law	25.04	925	43.88	955	41.70	958	47,133.33	49.20
Literature	15.78	1,243	23.57	1,181	24.53	1,359	34,961.50	25.73
Medicine	24.00	2,836	40.65	2,798	44.36	2,643	132,120.09	49.99
Music	20.13	232	27.79	238	28.79	222	7,234.49	32.59
Philosophy, Psychology	14.43	895	29.70	895	28.11	991	29,387.94	29.65
Poetry, Drama	13.63	599	26.75	563	22.14	617	15,492.93	25.11
Religion	12.26	1,118	17.76	1,100	19.31	1,171	25,294.72	21.60
Science	24.88	2,535	46.57	2,556	51.19	2,559	142,411.62	55.65
Sociology, Economics	29.88	5,066	33.35	4,761	33.33	5,043	152,982.93	30.34
Sports, Recreation	12.28	623	20.16	530	23.43	573	13,320.82	23.25
Technology	23.61	1,797	45.80	1,693	50.37	1,904	104,718.75	55.00
Travel	18.44	252	21.31	210	24.66	218	5,301.90	24.32
TOTAL	$19.22	31,184	$29.99	30,104	$31.46	32,035	$1,038,816.00	$32.43

TABLE A-1

HARDCOVER AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES—LESS THAN $81

CATEGORY	1983	1984		1985		1986 FINAL		
	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	TOTAL	PRICES
Agriculture	$27.76	333	$28.85	337	$29.99	356	$ 11,354.55	$31.89
Art	26.77	1,041	28.90	868	30.05	961	30,092.10	31.63
Biography	19.77	1,393	20.91	1,282	20.81	1,431	31,000.93	21.66
Business	24.02	1,103	24.74	1,024	27.27	1,088	30,938.38	28.44
Education	21.32	576	21.81	598	24.02	556	14,315.31	25.75
Fiction	14.14	1,987	14.49	1,799	15.24	2,197	34,906.41	15.89
General Works	26.12	1,530	26.97	1,561	29.05	1,441	45,903.53	31.86
History	23.85	1,401	23.89	1,487	25.41	1,578	42,667.58	27.04
Home Economics	14.53	654	15.53	591	17.11	528	9,718.72	18.41
Juveniles	9.15	2,394	9.75	2,529	9.95	3,062	32,070.16	10.47
Language	25.26	406	22.96	343	27.61	340	10,282.02	30.24
Law	30.25	854	31.60	888	35.87	863	22,170.73	37.28
Literature	21.31	1,230	21.69	1,169	23.46	1,346	33,146.00	24.63
Medicine	33.02	2,601	33.93	2,505	36.29	2,235	93,449.58	37.34
Music	24.06	240	25.01	236	27.72	217	5,707.98	26.30
Philosophy, Psychology	25.08	880	25.22	886	27.34	980	27,914.94	28.48
Poetry, Drama	19.39	588	19.32	554	20.90	610	13,918.93	22.82
Religion	15.93	1,111	16.30	1,096	18.88	1,162	23,331.27	20.08
Science	36.49	2,265	37.71	2,232	40.06	2,122	86,919.44	40.96
Sociology, Economics	24.83	4,977	25.48	4,689	27.91	4,978	143,826.93	28.89
Sports, Recreation	10.07	618	19.27	525	21.36	571	12,430.82	21.77
Technology	34.16	1,629	35.77	1,507	38.60	1,630	65,004.19	39.88
Travel	18.36	248	18.92	207	22.07	216	5,127.40	23.74
TOTAL	$24.15	30,059	$24.66	28,913	$26.57	30,468	$827,244.76	$27.15

TABLE B

MASS MARKET PAPERBACKS AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES

CATEGORY	1984	1985		1986 FINAL		
	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	TOTAL	PRICES
Agriculture	$2.85	7	$5.75	6	$ 36.25	$6.04
Art	8.28	3	9.80	3	29.40	9.80
Biography	4.45	79	4.81	76	391.55	5.15
Business	4.91	26	7.57	31	239.50	7.72
Education	5.15	12	6.07	20	145.55	7.27
Fiction	3.02	2,524	3.24	2,424	8,398.10	3.46
General Works	4.58	86	4.64	61	309.15	5.06
History	3.77	31	5.38	33	171.15	5.18
Home Economics	4.94	101	5.65	97	604.70	6.23
Juveniles	2.31	427	2.71	461	1,250.15	2.71
Language	5.55	14	4.28	17	89.80	5.28
Law	5.11	6	6.62	4	15.90	3.97
Literature	3.62	35	4.76	35	172.35	4.92
Medicine	5.01	36	6.65	43	308.80	7.18
Music	5.28	9	5.67	10	42.05	4.20
Philosophy, Psychology	4.38	112	4.22	82	416.05	5.07
Poetry, Drama	5.10	16	4.88	27	155.55	5.76
Religion	3.87	24	3.21	25	96.00	3.84
Science	3.55	15	4.83	14	82.70	5.90
Sociology, Economics	4.42	44	4.76	55	292.80	5.32
Sports, Recreation	4.06	149	3.80	160	654.95	4.09
Technology	8.61	42	12.29	36	435.05	12.08
Travel	5.86	9	4.93	10	50.15	5.01
TOTAL	$3.41	3,807	$3.63	3,730	$14,387.65	$3.99

TABLE C

TRADE PAPERBACKS AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES

CATEGORY	1977	1984		1985		1986 FINAL		
	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	PRICES	VOLS.	TOTAL	PRICES
Agriculture	$5.01	131	$27.05	198	$ 9.50	149	$ 1,969.14	$13.22
Art	6.27	671	13.13	593	14.04	641	9,908.85	15.46
Biography	4.91	560	15.09	536	10.78	591	6,688.24	11.32
Business	7.09	506	17.10	425	16.83	421	7,813.90	18.56
Education	5.72	433	12.84	440	12.98	412	5,770.87	14.01
Fiction	4.20	696	8.95	726	13.66	897	7,753.47	8.64
General Works	6.18	1,268	14.32	1,123	19.13	828	23,547.38	28.44
History	5.81	744	13.49	729	14.08	766	11,149.02	14.55
Home Economics	4.77	544	9.40	513	9.22	450	4,483.47	9.96
Juveniles	2.68	412	5.94	767	5.20	906	5,175.41	5.71
Language	7.79	219	11.60	252	13.25	287	4,106.65	14.31
Law	10.66	371	17.61	339	18.46	364	6,354.82	17.46
Literature	5.18	652	11.70	694	14.04	712	9,392.03	13.19
Medicine	7.63	651	15.78	698	16.01	692	13,380.92	19.34
Music	6.36	136	12.53	113	12.20	117	1,599.20	18.67
Philosophy, Psychology	5.57	540	13.64	523	13.25	564	7,535.05	13.36
Poetry, Drama	4.71	511	8.88	550	8.86	596	5,974.65	10.02
Religion	3.68	1,314	9.32	1,373	9.30	1,525	14,114.75	9.26
Science	8.81	589	16.22	677	19.78	707	16,453.94	23.27
Sociology, Economics	6.03	2,481	17.72	2,402	16.30	2,597	43,528.45	16.76
Sports, Recreation	4.87	467	11.40	447	10.66	430	4,939.52	11.49
Technology	7.97	692	21.11	722	21.08	682	17,422.38	25.55
Travel	5.21	274	9.88	235	10.48	299	3,262.30	10.91
TOTAL	$5.93	14,880	$13.86	15,075	$13.98	15,633	$232,324.41	$14.86